American Girl
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May/June 2005
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Keep in Touch with Faraway Friends
Funny Pet Photos
Plus! Girls talk about allowance

American Girl™

Volume 13, Number 3

2 **Letters from You**

3 **Girls Express**

8 **Contest**
Sit, Stay…Smile!

10 **Heart to Heart**
Money Matters

12 **Friendship Matters**
Smiles Across the Miles

14 **All Fired Up!**

18 **Quiz**
Pop and Mom Quiz!

19 **Redo Your Room**

26 **The Whole You**
Are You a Big Worrier?

28 **Cooking**
Take a Dip

30 **Princess Caroline and Me**

38 **Brain Waves**

43 **Mini Mag**

45 **Posters**

47 **Help!**

49 **Behind the Scenes**

Plus: AG's Door Hangers

See AG Online!
Visit americangirl.com to peek behind the scenes of AG magazine!

Always get a parent's permission before surfing the Web or giving out your full name, address, or any other personal info.

Redo Your Room
Brighten your bedroom with these colorful crafts.

19

All Fired Up!
You won't *believe* the jump-rope tricks these girls can do.

14

Contents

Proud to Be an American Girl!™

Smiles Across the Miles
Cute and clever ways to keep in touch with your faraway friends

12

Sit, Stay...Smile!
Laugh at these kooky contest winners!

8

About the Cover

Meet Victoria J., age 12. We asked her some questions related to this issue.

Do you have a dog?

Yes, I have two black Labs named Mingo and Casey.

Do you like to decorate your room?

Yes! I put up posters, lights, and pictures of my friends and family.

Are you more like your mom or your dad?

My mom, definitely. We both love to watch movies and sing in the car.

Victoria J.

To see more pictures from our photo shoot go to "Behind the Scenes" on page 49.

Cover photo: Steven Talley

Letters from You

True Friends

I loved "The Friendship Buffet" in January/February 2005. You're right about needing all kinds of friends, and I think *all* friends should be trustworthy. No matter what kind of friend you have, you don't want her to blab your secrets!

Mandy E.

Age 12, Missouri

Party Planner

My mom and I loved the "Sweet Dreams Sleepover." We used the ideas for our New Year's Eve party! Now I'm going to have a sleepover party with my friends, and we'll use your ideas plus some of our own.

Colleen Y.

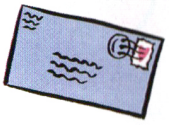
Age 13, New York

Sib Spats

I liked your "Heart to Heart" about siblings because I have an older sister, and we fight. I learned some new tips, so now we don't fight as much. Thanks!

Devika S.

Age 8, California



Write to Us!

Want to drop us a line? Write us at:

American Girl magazine
8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562

You can also send letters via e-mail to im_agmag_editor@americangirl.com. Either way, be sure to include your first and last name and your birth date. We can't use every letter we receive, but we read and learn from each one.

Win It!

On page 27, you'll read about our latest Win It! contest. Enter by sending your first and last name and your address by June 15 to:

Win It!—M/J 05
American Girl magazine
8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562

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1. Drawing not open to families of employees of American Girl and its affiliates.
2. Only one entry per family.
3. To be valid, all entries must be received by mail by June 15, 2005. Entries may not be faxed or e-mailed.
4. All entries become the property of American Girl and will not be returned.
5. Void where prohibited by law.

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The National Magazine Awards Finalist

American Girl®

Girls EXPRESS

Spell It Out

Pair this poem with tiny trinkets to make a heartfelt gift for Mother's Day or Father's Day.

I is for inspiration. You make me want to grow into something great.

L is for laughter—yours makes each day sweet.

O is for one of a kind—that's what you are.

V is for your voice—it's the music in my life.

E is for every day—that's when you're there for me.

Y is for yippee! I'm so happy you're mine.

O is for oops! You always help me fix my mistakes.

U is for unending, like my love for you.

Did You Know?

You'll flip for these fun facts!

Pet Project

Be Kind to Animals Week is May 1–7, 2005. Give your favorite furry friend some extra attention, or call your local animal shelter to see how you can help out.

Buzzword

synchronicity

How to say it:
sin-kro-NISS-ih-tee

What it means: The state of things happening at the same time

One way to use it: Janie and Rosa were best friends, and they always walked the halls in synchronicity.

The buzzword is tucked somewhere into this issue of *American Girl*. Can you find it? Answer is on page 42.

Find It!

Look for fun facts sprinkled throughout the magazine!

Illustrations: Tracey Wood

Lunch Box

Use leftover breakfast pancakes as the bread for these scrumptious sandwiches.

Pancakes + Peanut Butter + Jelly = PB & Cakes
Pancakes + Honey Drizzle + Banana = Monkey Lunch
Pancakes + Syrup Drizzle + Bacon Strips = Bunch o' Brunch

Mix & Match Moms

Pair the stars with their moms in our Mother's Day quiz.

Answers on page 42.

Secret Script

We asked a reader to review this kit for invisible writing.

"You write on paper with the special pen, and then you shine the ring light on it to see what you wrote. I made cool designs with the stencils, but I think the price should be lower."

Invisible Secrets Star Shiner, $12.99 each

★★★☆☆

Zoey M.
Age 10, Iowa

Photo: Jamie Young

Butterfly Lettering

Dress up a Mother's Day card with Abreana's alphabet.

Abreana B.

True Story

The newborn calves needed a mom, so Lauren M. stepped in!

Dear American Girl,

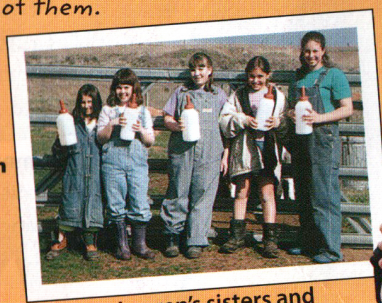
I live on a farm, and we raise cattle. A few years ago, seven of our newborn calves were stolen! The police caught the guy who took them, and we brought the calves home.

The calves had been away from their mothers too long, so my mom, my two sisters, and I had to bottle-feed the calves twice a day. We had to mix up a special milk drink for them, and we gave it to them in big two-quart bottles! We named the calves after the Seven Dwarves. My dad also brought us another calf that needed our help, and we named her Snow White. We missed them after they grew up and went out to pasture, but we had fun taking care of them.

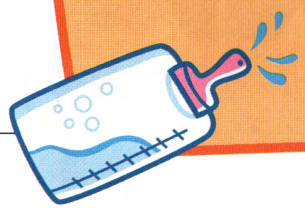
Sincerely,

Lauren M.

Age 13, Washington



Lauren's sisters and friends helped out, too.



Cut out your answer and mail it to us with your first and last name, address, and birth date.

Creative Corner

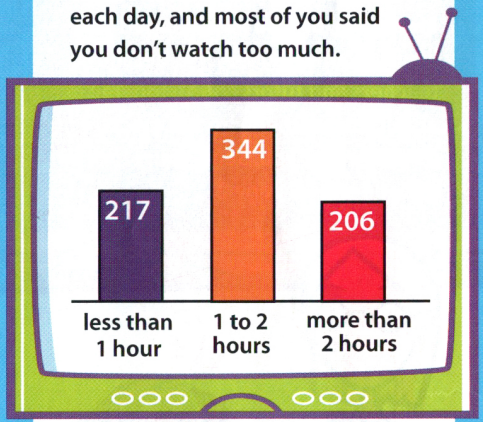
Pretty Petals

Photo: Jamie Young

Cut out card. Flip over for directions.

AG Poll

In our January/February issue, we asked how much TV you watched each day, and most of you said you don't watch too much.

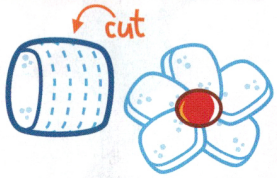


Next question:

Some teachers are grading papers with purple pens instead of red, thinking that purple ink marks are less discouraging than red. Which ink do you like better for grades? Circle your choice.

Pretty Petals

1 Using clean, dry scissors, snip a large marshmallow into 5 slices as shown.



2 Carefully press marshmallow slices onto a frosted cupcake to look like flower petals.

3 Add a colored candy to the center of the flower. What a sweet treat!

Help Wanted!

We're looking for terrific teachers! Tell us about the educator who makes every day exciting, who inspires you to dream big, or who has changed your life in an amazing way. Homeschool teachers and tutors count, too. Tell us about the teacher who has made a big difference for you. Send your letter to the address on page 2.

She's GREAT, Hands Down!

Leah S. performs with a youth circus!

Leah S.'s life is one big balancing act. Leah, age 12, is a hand-balancer with a California circus for kids. Hand-balancing consists of lots of handstands and other tricks, Leah says, including some "weird, balancing-on-one-hand stuff."

The circus performs for audiences around Leah's hometown. Clowns, jugglers, acrobats, and other performers round out the troupe, and all the circus performers are kids.

Leah started out in gymnastics, and she still does some tumbling. She is working to perfect a one-handed handstand, a difficult move. "I have the strength, but I tilt too much to one side," she says.

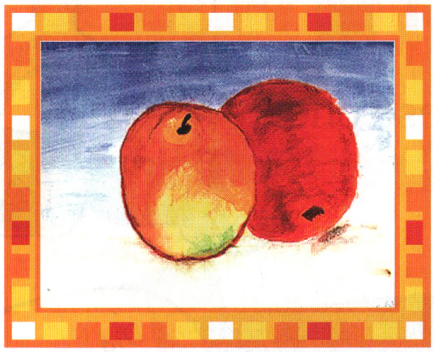
The sport is really fun, but there's a downside to standing on hands instead of feet: "After a three-hour practice, my wrists are dead!" Leah says.

Leah says gymnastics gave her the discipline for hand-balancing.

Photo: Ray Chavez

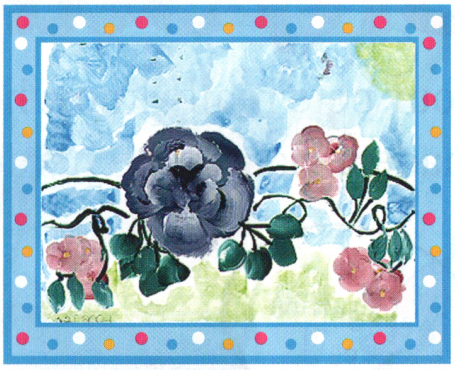
AG Art Gallery

Check out our collection of readers' paintings!



Eva F.
Age 12, Connecticut

Aly J.
Age 13, Utah



Anna Rose I.
Age 10, New York

Jessa V.
Age 13, Colorado

Morgan B.
Age 9, South Carolina

Shining Stars

Molly B. and Claire M. wanted to make sick kids feel better. So the Michigan girls hatched a plan to buy toys for kids in a local hospital.

To raise money, the two decided to make and sell beaded lizards. But their plan really took off after Molly herself had to stay in the hospital and saw firsthand that kids there needed more to do than just sit around and watch TV.

With help from their little sisters and friends, the girls made and sold hundreds of lizards for $1 each. Between sales and donations, they made more than $600, which they used to buy the toys. "We just kept thinking of the kids at the hospital. That's what kept us going," says Molly, age 10.

This year, the girls hope to find a new group to benefit from their crafty cause, which they call Lizards for Love. Helping out "feels really good," says nine-year-old Claire. "We feel like we're making a difference."

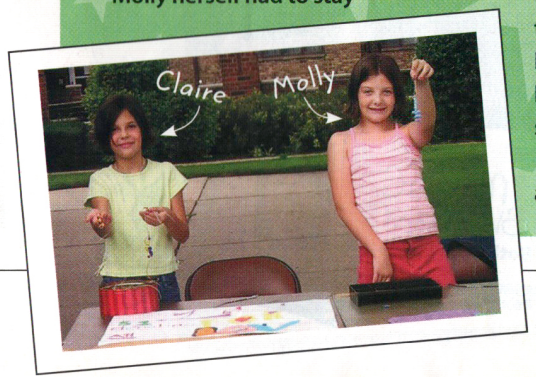
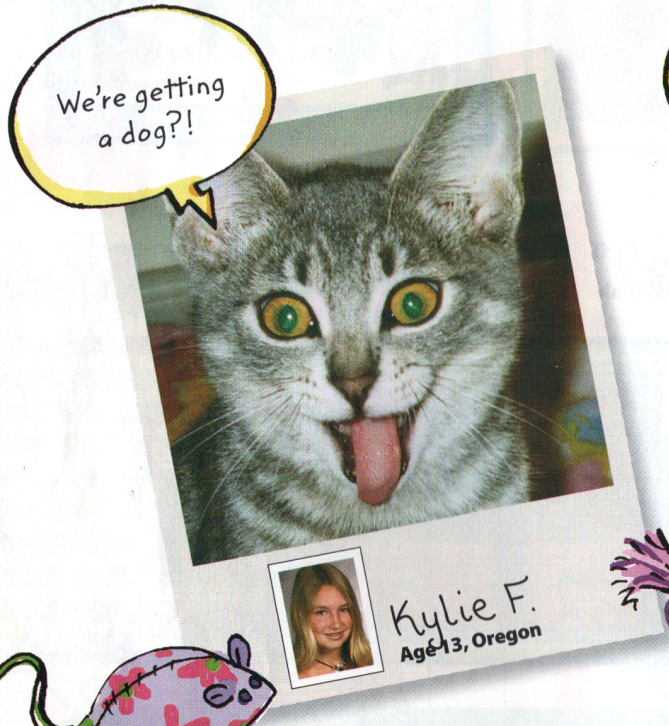


Photo: Jamie Young

You can shine, too.
Turn your crafting talent into cash! Sell your creations and donate the proceeds to your favorite charity.

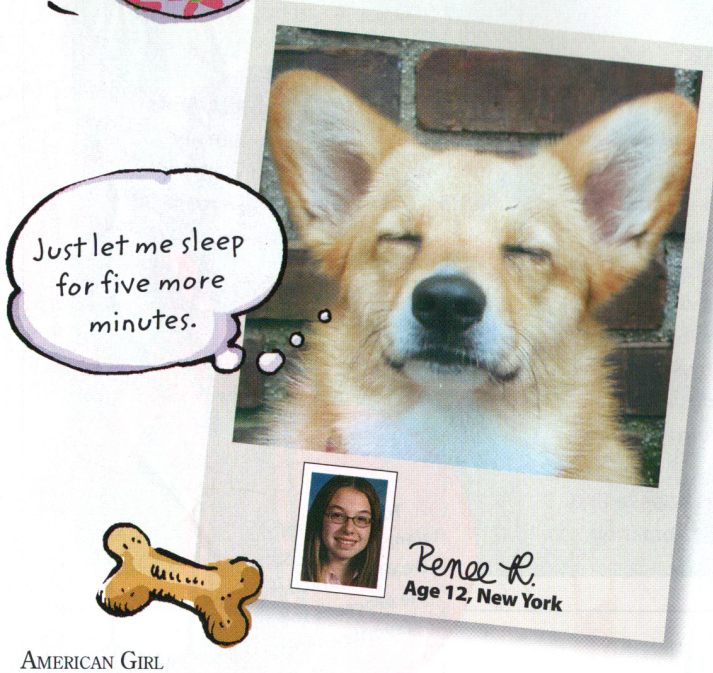
Sit, Stay...Smile!

Your pets really know how to ham it up. These photos made us laugh the hardest!



Kylie F.
Age 13, Oregon

Kayla F.
Age 10, Washington



Renee R.
Age 12, New York

Morgan C.
Shannon C.
Both age 10, Illinois

For another funny pet photo from Meg G., check out the poster on page 46.

Olivia K.
Age 9, Illinois

Emily S.
Age 10, Maryland

Casey B.
Age 11, Illinois

Meg H.
Age 13, Texas

New Contest: Thanksgiving Song

We're looking for new words to "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star"—just make sure they're about Thanksgiving! Stuck? This is what we came up with:

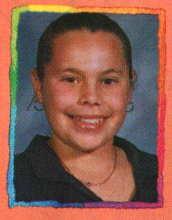
Turkey, stuffing, gravy, spuds,
These Thanksgiving foods I love.
Piled up high upon my plate
Make me want to celebrate.
Turkey, stuffing, gravy, spuds,
These Thanksgiving foods I love.

Send your song to the address on page 2, along with your first and last name, address, and birth date. Deadline: June 10, 2005. Winners will appear in the November/December 2005 issue. Sorry, we can't return entries.

Illustrations: Lauren Scheuer

Money Matters

Girls like you share how they feel about allowances—how much is fair, what girls should do to earn one, and how to ask for a raise.



In my house we have a chore chart that we keep on the refrigerator. For each chore I do, my mom signs her name on the chart. At the end of the week, we count up the signatures, and I get 25 cents for each chore I did. It works really well!

Courtney C.
Age 11, New Jersey

I get 30 dollars a month for my allowance, and it teaches me a lot about managing money. I've learned that if I don't spend wisely, I could be out of money for the rest of the month, and who knows when I'll need it!

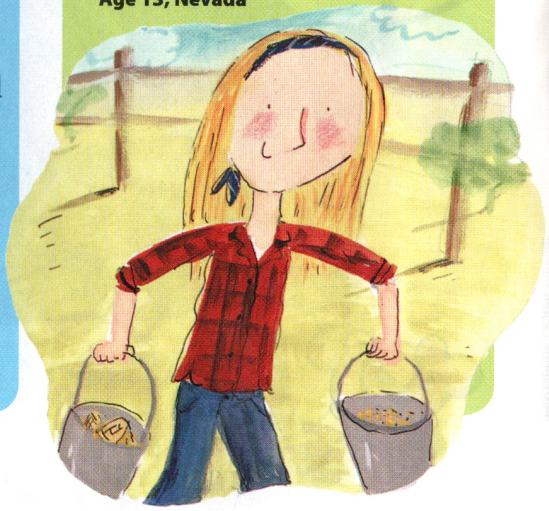
Samantha H.
Age 11, Iowa

When I wanted my parents to raise my allowance, I typed up a report stating why I wanted more money and what I would do to earn it. My parents noticed the extra mile I went to ask for a raise and agreed to my proposal.

Sylvia S.
Age 13, Minnesota

I live on a ranch and have a lot of chores to do, but I don't get paid an allowance for doing them. I don't think that parents should have to persuade their kids with money to do things around the house. The good feeling you get from helping your family out means more than money ever could.

Kori S.
Age 13, Nevada



Before asking for a raise, be extra responsible about doing your chores for a couple of days. Then make sure you ask your parents when they aren't busy with something else.

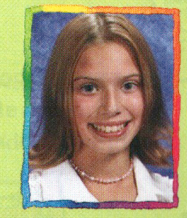
Alicia A.
Age 13, Minnesota

Big Truth

Each family is different and has to decide what works.

I don't think that allowances should be based on grades. You should always try to do your best in school, not just when you're getting paid to.

Noelle S.
Age 13, Missouri



I get five dollars each week but one dollar of it has to go to church, charity, or savings for college. I think this is fair because my parents and I both get what we want.

Taylor M.
Age 12, New Hampshire

I don't get an allowance, but I don't mind because my mom pays for clothes, food, movie tickets, and other fun events. I still do chores around the house. Helping out is the least that I can do.

Natalie N.
Age 13, Iowa

Speak from Your Heart

Next subject: Unique winter-holiday traditions. Do you set out chips and salsa for Santa instead of cookies? Maybe your family goes sledding in your backyard when the clock strikes midnight on New Year's Eve. Tell us about your special tradition and how it started!

Send answers, name, birth date, and school photo to the address on page 2. Deadline: June 7, 2005. Some answers will appear in the November/December 2005 issue. ✦

For readers who get an allowance, five dollars per week is the average amount.

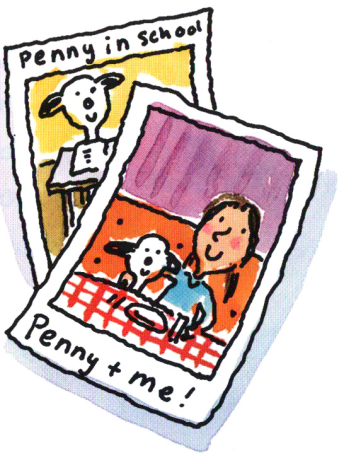
Illustrations: Laura Cornell

Smiles Across the Miles

What can you do to stay close to friends who are far away? Here are great ideas from girls like you, and AG too!

Mascot Mail

Draw a cute animal mascot, cut it out, and give it a name. Take it with you to school, a restaurant, or basketball practice—anywhere you wish your friend could be. Take funny photos and send them to your friend along with the mascot. Ask her to do the same!



Code Breakers

"My friend Deborah and I have a lot in common, especially the fact that we both love detective stuff. We send e-mails in code, and make up mysteries and riddles."

Mary F.
Age 11, North Carolina

Bear Necessities

"My friend and I bought a stuffed bear and an outfit together. After my friend moved, I kept the bear. Every few months we send the bear to each other with her accessories and a letter."

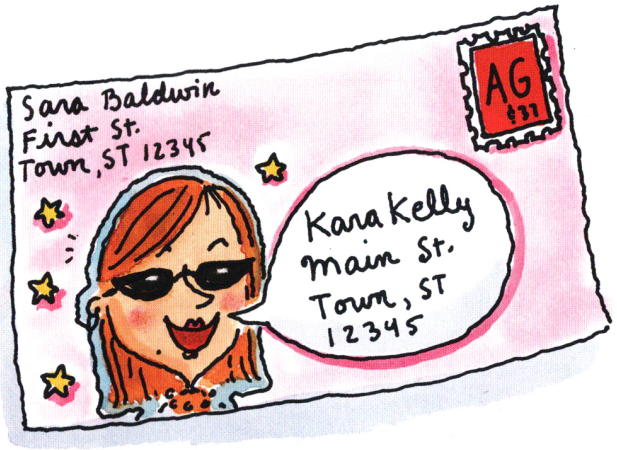
Jenna F.
Age 12, Indiana

Cut and Paste

Start a collage with a friend. Paste words, pictures, and stickers onto a piece of colorful paper. Send it to your friend. She can add to it and send it back. When it's full, start another one!

Send a Star

Clip a photo of your friend's favorite movie star from a magazine. Glue it to the front of your envelope. Draw a speech bubble and write your friend's address inside!



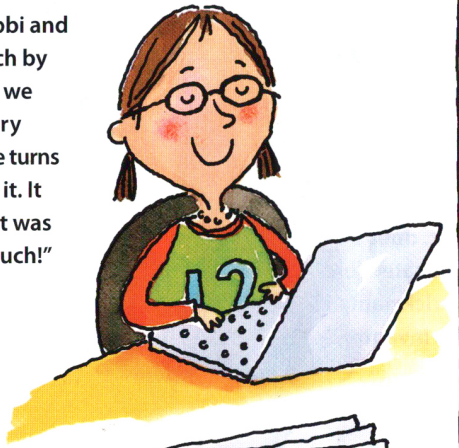
Surprise!

Put a surprise in your letter before you send it it for a special touch. Good ideas include sparkly stickers, a funny comic strip, a stick of gum, a poem you wrote, song lyrics that remind you of your friend, a drawing you did, or a photo of you.

Share a Story

"My cousin Abbi and I keep in touch by e-mail. Once we started a story together. We would take turns adding a paragraph to it. It turned out great, and it was a fun way to keep in touch!"

Carli S.
Age 14, Florida



Movie Marathon

Have a movie marathon with your friend. You both rent the same movie, watch it at the same time, and have the same snacks. Afterward, you can IM or call each other to talk about it.

Longer Letter Later

"I like to write a letter for about a week and write a little each day. By the end of the week, I have five or more pages written! It's a way of making sure you don't miss anything you want to tell your friend."

Jennifer B.
Age 13, Mississippi

Friend Folder

Keep your friend's letters in a decorated folder or three-ring binder. When you miss her, flip through her old letters. ★

BFF

Illustrations: Amanda Haley

Hanna L. does a TJ, a complicated, high-flying trick named after its inventor.

Tawny M. uses two ropes for the rump jump!

With quick tricks and sparkling smiles, the Firecrackers jump-rope team explodes with excitement.

All Fir

Madalynn M. does a double under cross, which means she swings the rope under her feet twice and crosses her arms, all before landing!

Brooke A. is all smiles during a knee jump. Yep, she's jumping on her knees!

ed Up!

The Firecrackers performed for thousands of people during halftime of this basketball game.

Imagine spinning a jump rope so quickly that the crowd can barely see it. Imagine holding a rope for someone else to jump while you're jumping a rope yourself. Imagine jumping not just on your feet but on your knees, your tummy, and your backside.

The Firecrackers have tons of tricks like these. Audiences sparkle with excitement after a performance by these young athletes who have turned the playground pastime of jumping rope into a spirited sport—one that seems to defy gravity.

The team makes its flashy action look effortless, but don't be fooled. It takes tons of practice to master the tricks. Firecrackers practice almost every day, and the workouts get harder and more frequent before their big performances. "Things don't come easily," says Lauren D. "You have to work for them."

Their sport requires skill, endurance, discipline, and, above all, teamwork. But for many of the girls, the best part about being a Firecracker

Go to americangirl.com and click on "Magazine" to see the Firecrackers in action.

is the performances. "The crowd is screaming, and you're happy, and you just naturally smile," says Lauren A.

The Firecrackers started when a group of girls at an Ohio elementary school began coming to the gym at lunch and recess to practice the jump-rope tricks they had learned in gym class. Their gym teacher became their coach. The team practiced hard, and soon they were invited to perform at local games. Since then, the team has gotten really well known. Firecrackers have performed in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, on television shows, and at college and pro basketball games. This year's team got to entertain at the presidential inauguration in Washington, D.C.!

Being a Firecracker means lots of hard work, lots of travel, and lots of togetherness. "We're like a big family," says Kaitlyn R. Another Firecracker, Kaitlyn C., adds, "We're like sisters. We see each other all the time." ★

Photos: Rudi Ayasse, Joe Oliver

Try This Trick!

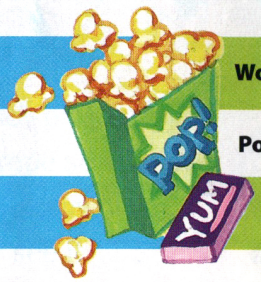
One Firecracker trick consists of a group of girls jumping one rope held by one girl. It's easy to mess up because if the girls don't jump in synchronicity, the rope can get caught on their feet. But you can try this one with your friends. The tallest girl holds an adult-size jump rope and begins jumping. Others can join one at a time to form a jumping line in front of the girl holding the rope. To get close, a jumper can put her hands on the shoulders of the girl in front of her, but don't press down!

Danielle D. "jumps" her whole body off the ground in the tummy jump.

Pop 1 and Mom Quiz!

See how well you know your parents! Fill out this chart and have them look at your answers.

Illustrations: Carol Yoshizumi

Full name (including middle)?	
Childhood nickname?	
Birthday (and year)?	
Place where he/she was born?	
Oldest, middle, youngest, or only child?	
Sings in the car?	
Would rather have nachos or ice cream?	
Popcorn, candy, or both at the movies?	
Did he/she ever have long hair?	
Did he/she ever wear braces?	
Did he/she ever win a really exciting prize?	
Favorite comic-strip character?	
Drinks coffee? With sugar or cream?	
Can tell a really funny joke?	
Is the most like you? ★	

Redo Your Room

Picking a color theme can make your room stand out. Try some of these decorating projects and give your room a makeover!

Photos: Steven Talley. Styling: Katie Griffin, Carrie Griffin Boyd, Liz Strause, Cindy Stutzel

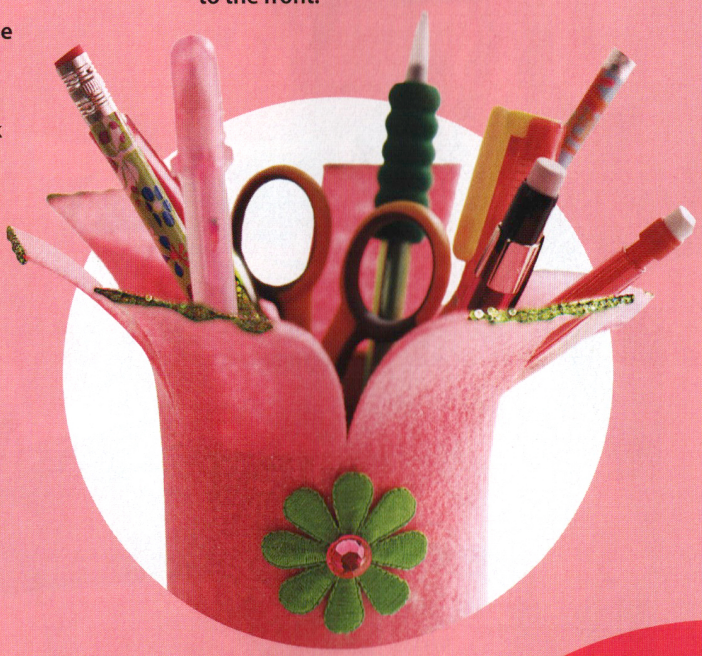
Preppy in Pink

Plush Pencil Cup

Cut a piece of felt to fit around a clean, empty jar. Leave two inches extra so that the felt is taller than the jar. Glue the felt to the jar. Let dry. Cut slits in the extra felt at the top of the jar. Add a line of glue at the top of each slit. Dip in glitter and let dry. Add a cute applique to the front.

It's MY Room

Cut the letters of your name out of colorful patterned scrapbook papers. Go to americangirl.com and click on "Magazine" to print out letter templates. Use a paper punch to put holes in the tops of the letters. Connect the letters with colorful string and hang.



Yarn Pulls

Paint new drawer pulls (available at hardware stores). Let dry. Cover the top of the pull with glue. Starting at the center, begin wrapping yarn around in a spiral, pressing it into the glue. Cut yarn when you reach the edge. Let dry. Embellish it by gluing on a button and a rhinestone.

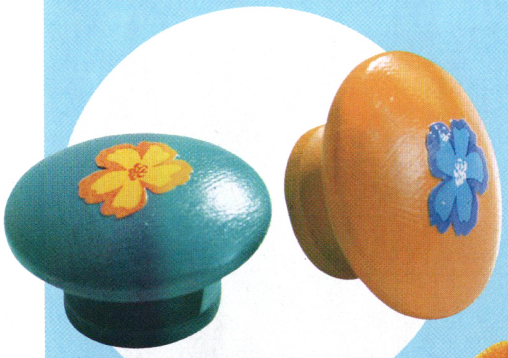
Wrap It Up

For cool wall art, wrap box tops in fun wrapping paper. Ask an adult to help you put a nail in your wall to hang each box top.

Pillow Pics

Cut 4 strips of felt. Use fabric glue to attach felt to a pillow, allowing space for a picture to slide in. Change the photo every week!

Bold and Beachy

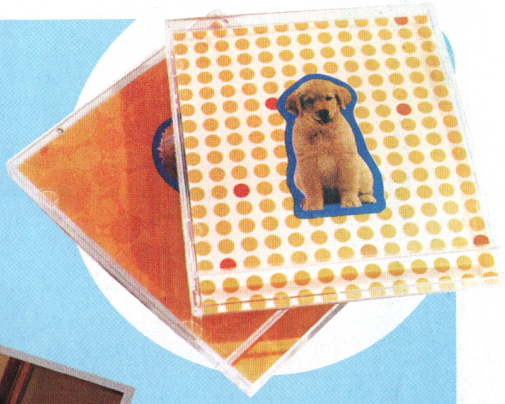


Sticker Art

Place cute stickers on drawer pulls. Cover with Mod Podge to seal. Let dry.

Sand Box

Layer colored sand in a glass vase or jar. Place clothespins in the sand to hold photos.



Creative Cases

Put your CD cases to use! Remove the back panel from an empty CD case (they pop out easily). Cut a piece of patterned paper to fit in the back panel. Secure paper with double-stick tape. Use removable double-stick tape to attach a photo to the frame. Mount case to your wall using a removable adhesive, such as Plasti-Tak. Flip open the cover and change the photo whenever you want.

Beach Disco Ball

It's a parasol party! Open several drink parasols (available at party stores). Carefully and gently poke ends of toothpicks into a Styrofoam ball. Cut a piece of ribbon and attach it to the ball with glue and T-pins. Let dry and hang.

Mirror on the Wall

Remove flowers from a lei (available at party stores). Use jewel glue to attach flowers to a wall mirror. Add rhinestones to flowers. Let dry. Ask an adult to help you hang it. Lookin' good!

Pillow Present

Tie colorful ribbons around a throw pillow.

Perfectly Purple

Totally Tubular

Wrap an empty gift wrap tube with a piece of wrapping paper. Apply a removable adhesive, such as Plasti-Tak, to the back of the tube for extra support. Ask an adult to put a tack on the inside of each end of the tube to hang on your wall. Use tacks to hold pictures.

Glass Act

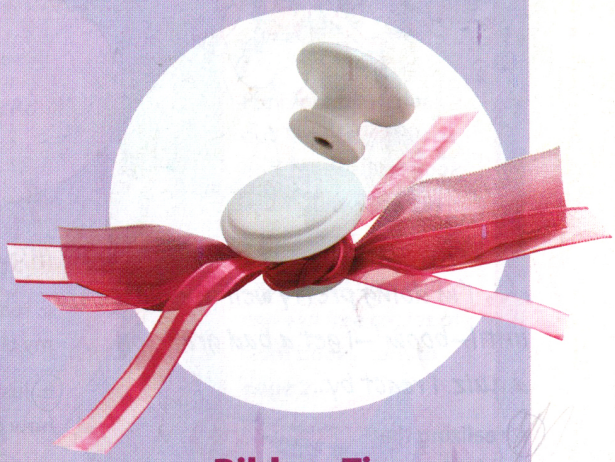
Clean out a glass bottle or jar and let dry completely. Squeeze acrylic paint into the bottle and put the cap back on. Hold the lid of the bottle and shake vigorously. Continue to shake until the inside of the bottle is covered with paint. Add more paint if necessary. You can also mix paint colors for a marbled effect.

Design a Frame

Show off your pictures in these creative frames. Squeeze glue in a pattern onto a frame mat. Carefully press on yarn following the glue lines. Let dry.

Pillow Patches

Turn a plain pillow into a fun accent. Attach one side of self-adhesive Velcro to a throw pillow. Attach the other side of Velcro to cute patches. Put a patch on the pillow, and change it depending on your mood!



Ribbon Ties

Tie pretty ribbons around your dresser drawer pulls. Simple and sweet!

Are You a Big Worrier?

Take our quiz and find out!

by Dr. Lynda Madison

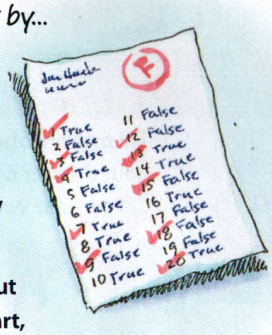
1. *The big game is tomorrow, and I'm thinking...*

a. get ready for a great game! We could go to the state championship if we win.

b. what if I mess up and blow the game for the whole team?

2. *I'm doing pretty well in a class until—boom!—I get a bad grade on a quiz. I react by...*

a. realizing that one bad score isn't the end of the world. I'll study differently next time.



b. worrying about whether I'm smart, and thinking I'm sure to fail.

3. *My teacher gives me a part in the school play. I find myself...*

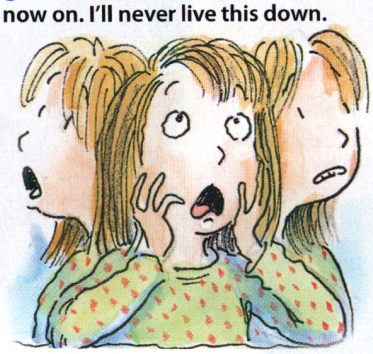
a. excited about my new adventure, even when the going gets tough. This is fun!

b. thinking of everything that could go wrong along the way, from forgetting my lines to tripping when I take my bow.

4. *When the seat of my pants rips in gym class and everyone sees, I...*

a. realize this could happen to anyone—my classmates will stop joking soon.

b. just know my life will be awful from now on. I'll never live this down.



5. *I wake up in the night and hear the wind whistling through my window. I decide to...*

a. close my eyes and think pleasant thoughts until I fall back to sleep.

b. lie there wide-eyed, imagining scary things that are making that eerie howl.

Answers

Mostly a's

If you had mostly a answers, you tend to look on the bright side of things and feel confident in most situations. Share your positive outlook with others!

Mostly b's

If you had mostly b answers, you may tend to see mountains where there are only little bumps in the road. Worrying can make things worse than they are.

Think Positive!

Positive thinking will help make you strong, confident, and worry-free. Here are three examples of how you can turn negative thoughts into positive ones.

I blew that speech! I don't ever want to show my face in class again!

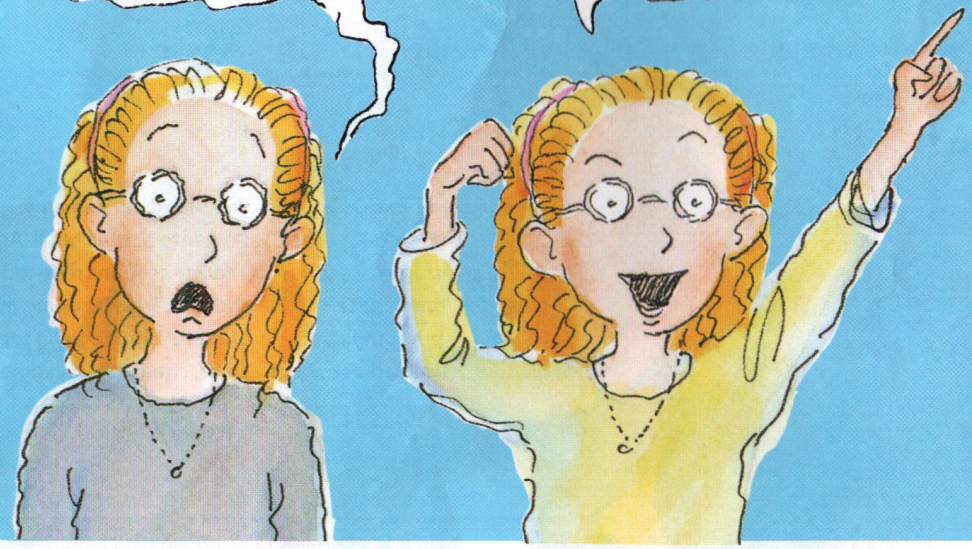
I'm human, and humans make mistakes.

I'm not popular enough to go to the party.

I tried things before that I was afraid of, and they turned out O.K.

I'm afraid of trying out for the squad. I just know I won't make it.

Even though I feel unsure, I'm going to take the challenge. ★



For more tips, check out *The Feelings Book* and *The Feelings Book Journal*, available in bookstores.

To find out how you can win free copies of both books, turn to page 2.

WIN IT!

Illustrations: Norm Bendell

Take a Dip

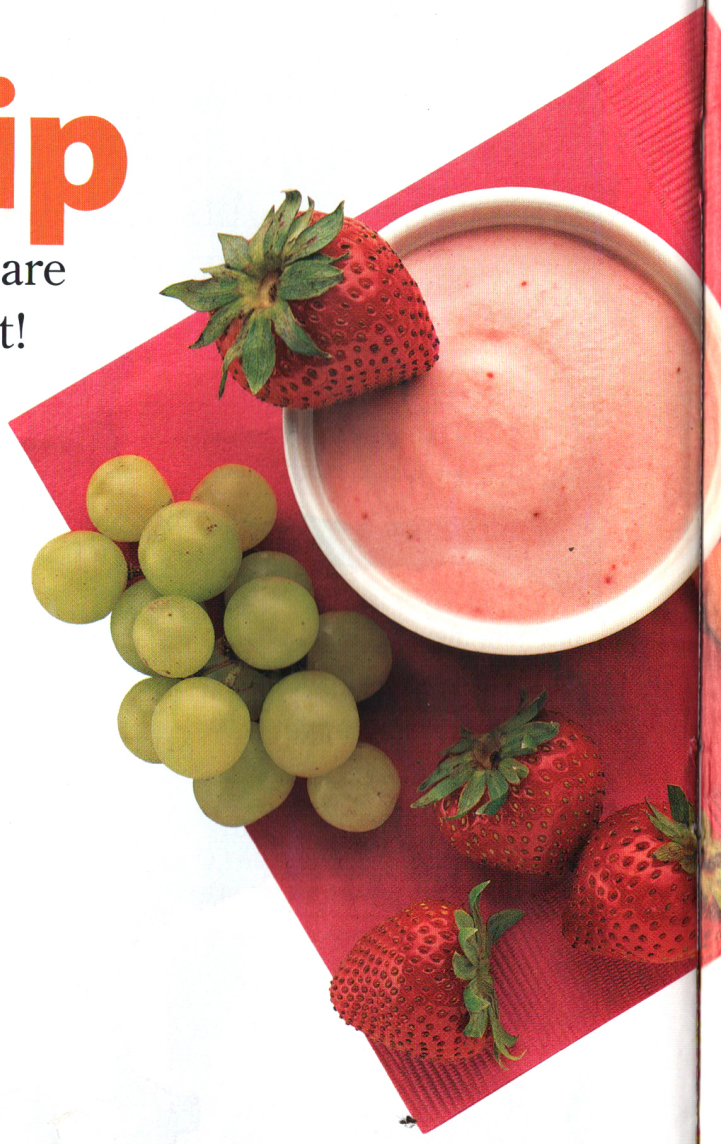
You'll dig these delicious dips that are easy to make and even easier to eat!

DIP TIPS

- Ask an adult to help you slice all the fruits and vegetables you will be dipping.
- * Right after cutting, dunk fruit slices into 2 teaspoons lemon juice mixed with 2 cups water to keep them from turning brown.

Fun Fruit

This dip makes fruit *berry* delicious! Scoop ½ cup strawberry-flavored applesauce into a blender. Add 2 tablespoons spreadable cream cheese. Ask an adult to help you blend until creamy. Pour into container. Dip fruit slices, berries, and grapes.



Snack Attack

Add some spice to your after-school snack. Put ½ cup cottage cheese, 1 teaspoon lemon juice, and 1 tablespoon milk into a blender. Ask an adult to help you blend until creamy. Pour into a small bowl. Add 1 to 2 teaspoons reduced-sodium taco seasoning mix. Stir until blended. Dip tortilla chips, cheese, and veggies.

PB and J

Try your favorite sandwich as a dip! In a container, stir together ¼ cup peanut butter and ¼ cup strawberry yogurt. Spoon more yogurt on top. Dip pretzels, pita slices, fruit, and veggies.

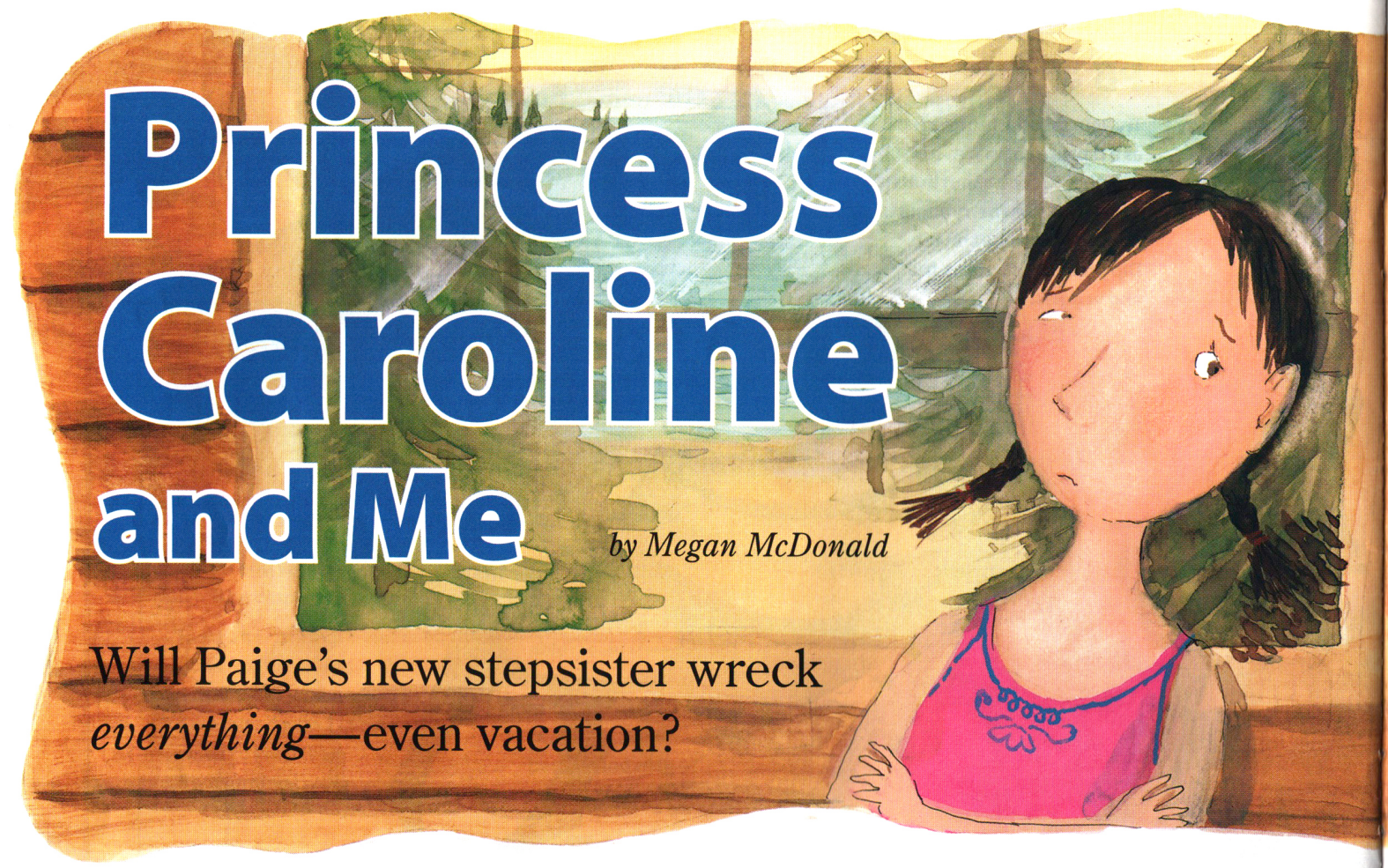
Dessert Dip

Save the sweetest dip for last. Stir 1 tablespoon peanut butter into ½ cup chocolate pudding. Pour dip into a waffle bowl and top with sprinkles. Dip cookies, marshmallows, and fruit.

Photos: Mike Walker Styling: Deborah Pike, Bonnie Rabert

Princess Caroline and Me

by Megan McDonald



Will Paige's new stepsister wreck *everything*—even vacation?

You've heard of Cinderella, right? No way can a girl make it through the fifth grade without having heard that story, like, a hundred million times. So you've heard plenty about the fairy-tale kind of stepsisters. But you haven't heard of mine—Caroline Lynn Gilmer-Pardo.

Up to now, I barely heard of Caroline Lynn Gilmer-Pardo myself. When Mom married Tim Pardo this past April, I met Caroline for only the second time. Most of the time she lives with her mom. Now we were going on vacation together.

"Be nice, Paige!" Mom said to me under her breath as we were packing the car.

"I'm nice!" I told her back.

"Caroline's had a rough time," Mom explained. "Now that she and her mom have moved to Illinois, she hardly ever gets to see her dad, except on vacations. Think how you'd feel if you rarely got to see your dad. Please try to get along. I really want this to work."

"I know, Mom. I know." Since my parents Still-Loved-Me-But-Didn't-Love-Each-Other-Anymore, I've been lugging half my room—pillow and stuffed animals and fuzzy slippers—from Mom's to Dad's every week. Sometimes I think Mom forgets I'm divorced, too!

Every year, as soon as school's out, my family goes to our cottage on Blueberry Island, off the coast of Maine.

MY family.

That used to mean Dad, Mom, me, and, of course, Charlie, our dog. Charlie's divorced, too. But he just lives with my dad now.

This year, my family is Mom, me, Tim (I'm supposed to call him by his first name!), and Caroline. No Dad. And no Charlie. Sniff! But I promised Mom I'd keep an open mind and make the best of it.

I already learned three things about my stepsister in the car: 1) She thinks the License Plate Game is for babies. 2) She has never seen a lighthouse. 3) She is not thrilled about sharing a bunk bed with me.

As soon as we stepped off the ferry, Caroline took one look around and said, "This is it?" I bit my tongue. What was she expecting? Chicago? But I was excited. When I smell Blueberry Island for the first time, it makes me turn cartwheels inside. That sea smell, the low cry of the foghorn, the slap-slap of waves on the shore, and the late afternoon fog creeping in on little cat feet, just like the poem Ms. Sanders read to us last year.

The fog was like pea soup by the time we got to the cottage. As soon as we dumped our bags, I said, "C'mon. Let's go to White Head Cliffs to watch the sunset."

Illustrations: Laura Cornell

"It's too late, honey," said Mom.

"But Mom, it's family tradition to go watch the sunset the first night!" Mom gave me a don't-go-there look.

"No sunset tonight," said Tim. "Too foggy." Who made him the weatherman? I like Tim just fine, but sometimes he just goes along with whatever Mom says.

"Let's just get settled," said Mom. "There's lots to do. Paige, why don't you show Caroline your bedroom. It'll be fun having a roomie, don't you think?" Something told me Caroline would not be hugging me and calling me "roomie" anytime soon.

We clomped down the hall to the room. "I call top bunk!" Caroline yelled as soon as we got there, scrambling up the ladder.

"No way. I always sleep up on top so I can see the stars."

"I called it," she said.

"So?"

"So, why should you always get your way?" she asked, her voice rising.

"Hello! Because it's my room. Besides, there are giant cobwebs up there," I informed her. She didn't budge.

I plopped my stuff on the bottom bunk, then stomped off to help Mom. Caroline was pacing around the cottage saying, "Hello? Hello? Hello?" way too loud, pressing buttons on some cell phone her mom gave her.

"Mom, somebody should tell her cell phones don't work on the island."

"I know, honey," said Mom. But nobody did.

I tried to be nice. Honest I did. "Want to play Blink?" I asked. "Or Mille Bornes or Sequence?" I said, pointing to a stack of games.

"I'm just going to watch my show," Caroline said. "It's about these two girls, and one's from another planet."

Story of my life, I couldn't help thinking.

Mom broke the bad news. No TV. It's pretty hard to watch TV when there's no electricity.

"Dad, how can there be no electricity?" Caroline asked, frowning.

"Honey, think of it like camping, only you don't have to sleep on the hard ground. It'll be fun!"

"You tricked me!" said Caroline. "I don't believe this." She stormed off and slammed the door to our room. I mean MY room.

was first one up the next morning. I tiptoed out, hopped on my bike, and headed for my favorite spot on the island.

If you ask me, there's no better place on Earth than Cathedral Woods. It's way quiet, like the hush after a first snow. Beams of sunlight gleam on the forest floor, making a breath-holding, heart-stopping scene. And when you look up, the tippy-top fingers of the spruce lace together like the trees are holding hands.

But the best part is a secret. If you wander off the pine-needle path and follow the tiny rock piles, they lead the way to…fairy houses! Some of the

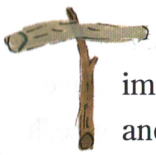
islanders call the place Fairy Village. You have to look real close, and you can find them tucked among the roots of the gnarly old trees. Teeny-tiny houses made out of twigs and pinecones, moss and bark and leaves!

Every year, I'm sure I won't find one.

Just then a glint of white caught my eye. A pebble? Shell? I bent down closer. A fairy house! The house had stick sides like a little log cabin and a bark roof sprouting tufts of green moss. Pebbles made a tiny path leading up to the house, and twigs stood up straight as soldiers, creating a fence all around it.

Some words were mysteriously scratched on a piece of bark at the foot of the tree:

I made a table by piling a few stones on top of each other, and added a pinecone chair. I could have stayed all morning, but it's better never to linger too long when you find a fairy house, because you don't want to be discovered.



Tim was stretching and yawning as I came in the door. "How'd everybody sleep?" he asked.

"Like a baby," I told him. "Hearing the waves always makes me feel like I'm in a giant rocking chair."

"Not me," said Caroline. "That foghorn kept me up half the night. Sounds like a whale with a stomach ache."

"My very own princess and the pea, huh?" said Tim, pulling Caroline onto the couch with him. She curled up like a cat next to her dad. Something pinched me inside. I couldn't help wishing it were my dad, pulling me close.

"Hungry?" Mom asked me.

"I could eat a bear!" I said. "Are we going to pick blueberries and make Dad's Famous Super-Duper Star-Studded Pancakes?"

Mom glanced over at Tim. "Not today, honey," said Mom. "Caroline wants to go into town."

"It's boring here," said Caroline. Her dad crinkled his eyebrows at her. "And I have to use the pay phone to call my mom."

"Can we at least go to Marvin's Pancake Kitchen?" I asked.

"We thought we'd eat at the café," said Tim.

"Dad says they have waffles like I like," said Caroline. "You can choose all your own toppings. Even chocolate chips and sprinkles and stuff."

"But that place is where all the tourists go!" I practically shouted.

"So? At least they have electricity," snapped Caroline.

"No fair!" I said, and looked at Mom. "We always go to Marvin's."

Mom said, "Paige, you're just going to have to be flexible this once."

"This once! How come Princess Caroline always gets her way? Why do we always have to do everything she wants, huh? I'm divorced too, you know. How come nobody feels bad for me?"

"Paige!" said Mom. "I don't like the way you're acting. Look, Tim and I can't force you two to be best friends, but the least you can do is try to get along. Now, do you want to come with us or not?"

"Not."

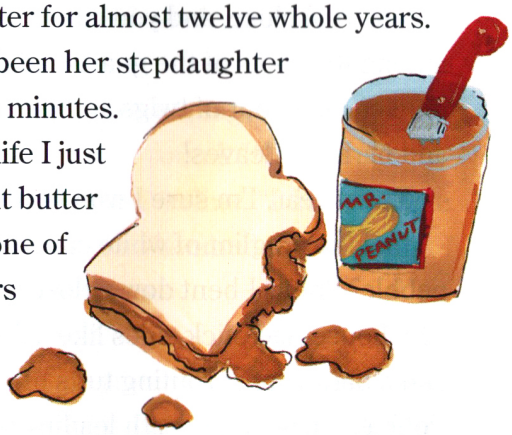
"Fine. You can stay here and make yourself a peanut butter sandwich."

"Fine," I said back.

I made all the noise I could fixing my sandwich. I banged the cupboard, thumped the jar on the counter, clattered the knife, and slapped peanut butter on some bread.

I put on a great show till everybody was out the door. Then I flopped down on the couch, feeling sorry for myself. Mostly I thought about Dad and Charlie, wondering if they were missing me, too. I ate my sandwich, but the bread tasted like cardboard and the peanut butter stuck to my gums.

Why was Mom taking Caroline's side? I've been her daughter for almost twelve whole years. Caroline's only been her stepdaughter for about twelve minutes. Some things in life I just don't get. Peanut butter without jelly is one of them. Stepsisters is another.



I knew Dad would tell me I had a choice. I could choose not to let Caroline ruin my whole vacation. So I made up my mind to try harder to be nice to her.

When Mom and Tim came back and said Caroline went to Shell Beach, I biked over to see if I could find her. But I didn't see her anywhere. I strolled on the beach, looking for lucky stones, filling my pockets with shells and bits of beach glass.

Later, back at the cottage, Caroline actually said she liked my shells. She showed me a ring she'd bought at Gifts from the Sea, made from a shell. It

was smooth and pink, with flecks of purple like tiny eyes.

"It's so pretty!" I told her. "It looks like the inside of a moon snail or a shark eye. You can find those on the beach here."

"Really?" Caroline twisted her ring with new appreciation.

Mom told a spooky story that night about the old Hitchcock place. The story goes that on the porch there's a rocking chair that rocks even when nobody's in it, even when there's no wind. Caroline leaned in to hear, and I don't think she was faking. For a split second, we were almost a family.

The next morning, I made sure Caroline was still asleep and snuck off to Cathedral Woods again. This time, I collected some fallen sticks and tied them together with grass. I leaned the tiny ladder up against the house. Then I raced home. Caroline was brushing her hair, and Mom and Tim were already making plans for the day.

"Can't we go look for seals at Seal Rock?" I asked Mom.

"Tim's going to take us windsurfing," said Mom, all cheery.

"Windsurfing? Do they even have that here? I've never even been and no way am I starting now. We never—"

"Just try it, Paige," Tim said. "If you don't like it we can—"

"It's really fun!" said Caroline. "How could she NOT like it?"

"Hello! I'm right here," I said. Caroline picked up her brush and stomped down the hall to the bathroom.

I went after her. She was madly brushing her hair in the mirror. "You know, if you brush your hair any harder, it'll all fall out," I said to the mirror Caroline.

"So?" Yank, yank, yank. "Ow!" she cried when she hit a knot.

"I wish I had thick hair like that," I said.

"At least there's one thing you don't hate about me."

"I don't hate you."

"Then how come you go off by yourself all the time, and you won't do anything I want to do?"

"You were sleeping! I just…everything's different. Never mind. We just don't like the same stuff, I guess. Look, I'll go, O.K.? But later we do something I want to do."

"Deal," said Caroline.

Caroline was really good at windsurfing. Of course. I felt like a beached whale. I could barely stand up or get my balance. And every time I did, I capsized right away and ended up with a

mouthful of seaweed.

"It just takes practice," said Caroline. "You'll get the hang of it."

"You mean I won't be eating seaweed forever?" I said, smiling and showing off my green teeth.

"Ooh! You look like you've been eating major spinach!" We both cracked up. It was worth a mouthful of seaweed just to laugh.

The next morning, I hurried out the door. The early mornings in Cathedral Woods were mine. All mine.

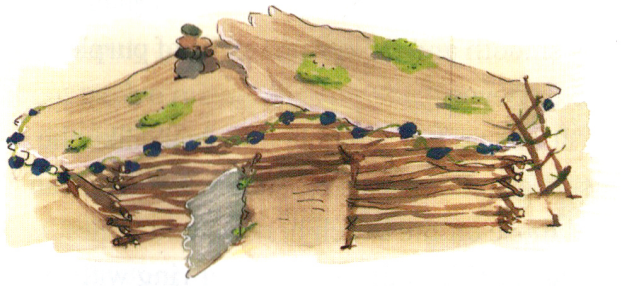
When I got to the fairy house, there was a door made of bark that actually opened and closed and, just outside the door, a rock hollow with a tiny pool of water!

A secret visitor had been here and found the same fairy house! I looked around but didn't see anybody, not even a shadow. Moving quickly, I scouted around and found several green tips of spruce. I stuck them upright all around the house like a grove of trees. Then I crept from the woods on little cat feet, silent as fog.

For the rest of the week, I tried asking Caroline to hike up to the lighthouse or explore the graveyard. But she always wanted to go off on her own. So much for our deal.

Every chance I got, I sneaked back to the fairy house. I tiptoed down the path, my heart thumping faster as I got closer. Each visit, I added something—a leaf umbrella, a bird feather, even a tiny hammock I made using a fern.

And each time I came back, I found a new surprise, better than the one before. One day there'd be blueberries around the roof, like a string of Christmas lights. Or a wildflower-petal garden. Then a whole miniature playground, with a rock-and-stick seesaw and a braided-grass swing.



The little house looked so magical, I could almost imagine fairies living in it. I couldn't help but wonder who else had discovered it. It didn't really matter. Half the fun was keeping it a secret. Especially from You-Know-Who.

When I woke up, I had a great idea for my last trip to the fairy house. But Mom was already awake and asked me to go pick some blueberries for pancakes. Finally!

I knew where the best ones grew, far away along the cliffs above Lobster Cove. I filled a whole pail. When I got back, Mom was packing up the kitchen alone.

"Everybody still sleeping?" I asked.

"Paige, you've been gone almost two hours," said Mom. "Tim and Caroline had to take the early ferry so he could get her to her plane on time."

"You mean she's gone? She just left? Without even saying good-bye?"

"We didn't know where in the world you were. Caroline went looking, but you weren't where she thought you'd be."

"That really stinks," I said. "I was trying to be friends, but I don't even think she likes me. And now..." My voice got all quivery.

Mom hugged me to her. "It's O.K., honey. I know you tried. It's just going to take some time. We'll see Caroline again at Thanksgiving," said Mom, smoothing my hair with her hand.

I helped Mom all morning. Before it was time to go, I asked if I could take one last bike ride, and say good-bye to the island.

"Be back in half an hour," Mom said. "I mean it."

There was one more thing I wanted to do at the fairy house. I ran softly down the path like I'd done so many times this past week. I kneeled down in front of the fairy house to study it. Everything was exactly the way I'd left it. No new surprises.

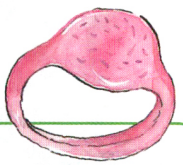
My heart sank. I couldn't help feeling disappointed. Still, I could add something.

I found some soft twigs and bent two of them into a curve. Then I wove some sticks and leaves between the twigs, forming a tiny bridge.

I crawled on the soft pine needles, looking for just the right spot, when I saw it. At the back of the fairy house, a new path.

At the end of the path, something pink caught my eye. A flower petal? Seashell? No, a ring! A perfect circle of seashell, smooth and pink as the hollow of a moon snail with purple flecks like tiny eyes.

Next to the ring, a message was spelled out in pebbles. A message just for me. ✦



Meet the Author

About age 10 Now

Megan McDonald

When I was writing my first book, I went to Monhegan Island, off the coast of Maine. I spent days overlooking the ocean, scribbling in my notebook. One day, I took a shortcut home through the piney woods and discovered a fairy village made of leaves and stones, moss and bark! It was truly enchanting, and I've wanted to write about it ever since.

Brainwaves

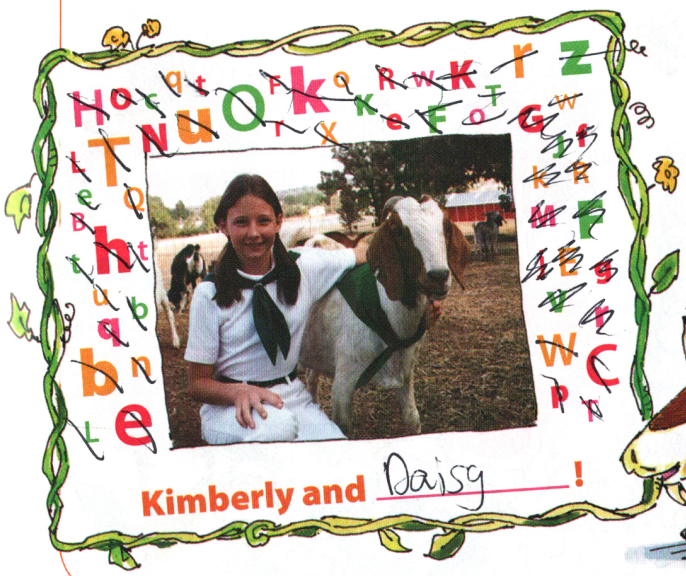
activities and puzzles

Beautiful Landing

A butterfly landed in this flower garden. Find and circle it.

Photo Fun

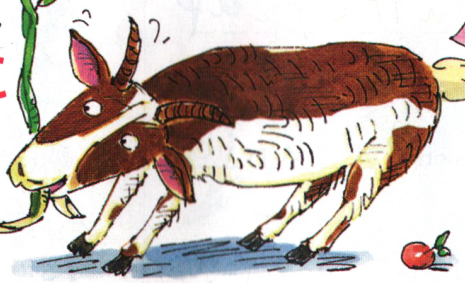
Kimberly B., age 14, from California, named her goat after a flower. To find her pet's name, cross off any letter you see on the frame from the alphabet list below. Some letters will repeat! Unscramble the remaining letters on the alphabet list.



Kimberly and Daisy !

Alphabet List

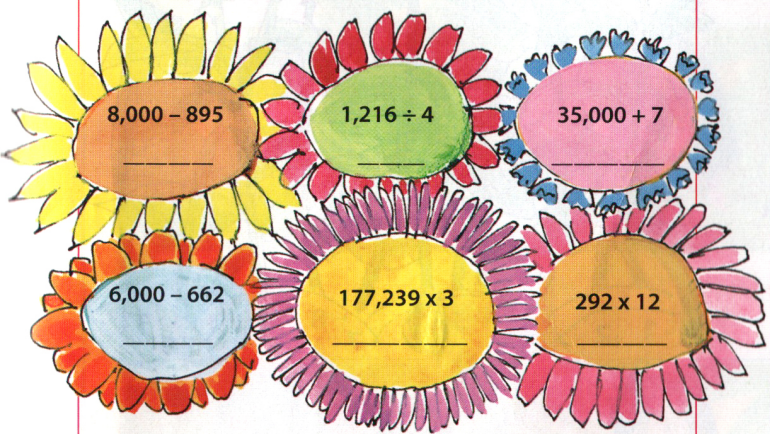
A B C D E F G H I
J K L M N O P Q R
S T U V W X Y Z



Send a **print** of your fun or funny photo to **Brain Waves** and maybe we'll use it in a **puzzle.** Write to the address on **page 2.** Sorry, photos can't be returned.

Calculator Crop

Use a calculator to solve each equation, then turn the calculator upside down to see a word. Write the word on the blank where it best fits.



To grow _____ , you need to _____

your _____ so it's nice and _____.

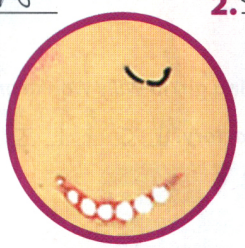
Plant the bulbs, then wet them with a _____.

Be sure to watch out for the _____!

Art Sleuth

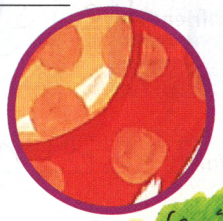
Search the pages of this issue to find where each snippet of the photo or illustration shown below came from. Write down where you found it.

1. 48



2. cover

3. _____



Illustrations: Paul Meisel

Vine o' Nine

Start at the bottom of the vine and answer these questions. If you get an answer right, you can move up a leaf. How high did you get?

What is the name of...

9 Sleeping Beauty? Briar Rose

8 a PowerPuff girl? buttercup

7 Harry Potter's aunt? Petunia

6 Harry Potter's mother? Lily

5 Bambi's skunk pal? flower

4 the Indian princess in *Peter Pan*? Tiger Lily

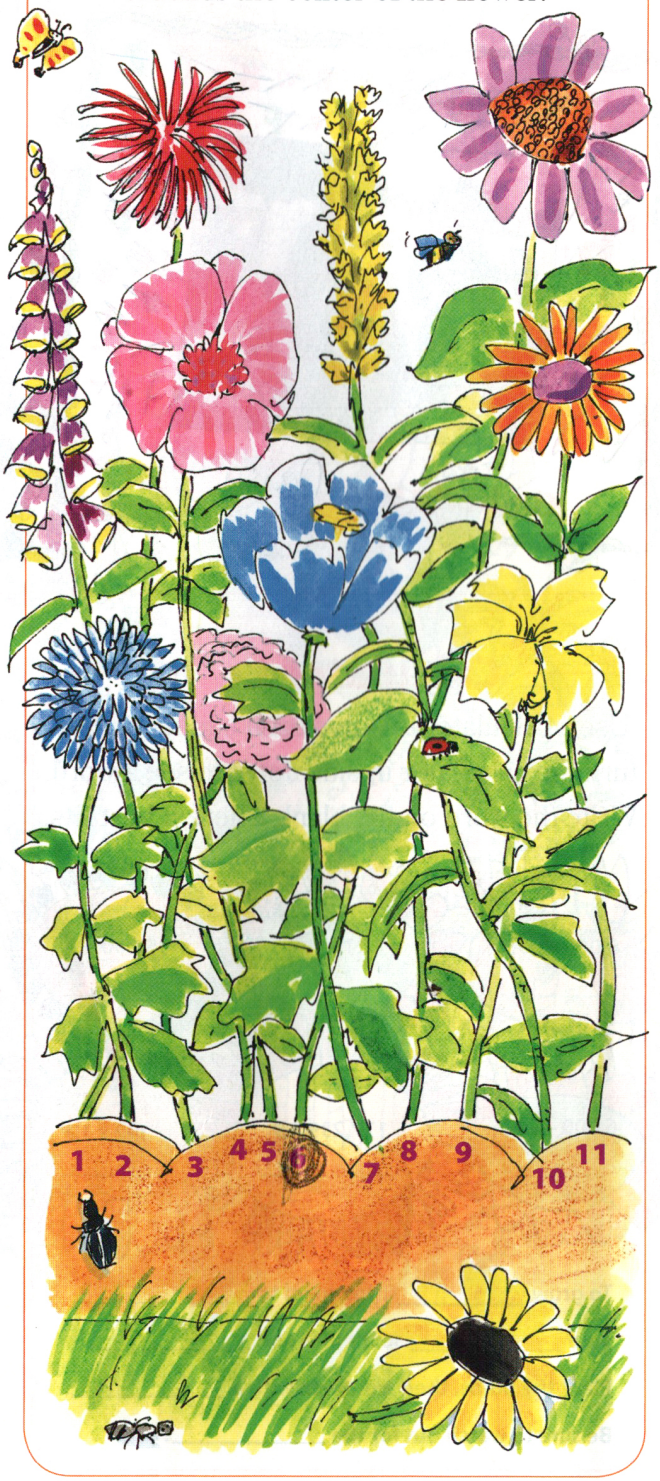
3 the gum-chewing girl in *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*? Violet

2 Donald Duck's girlfriend? Daisy

1 the princess in *Aladdin*? Jasmine

Stem Search

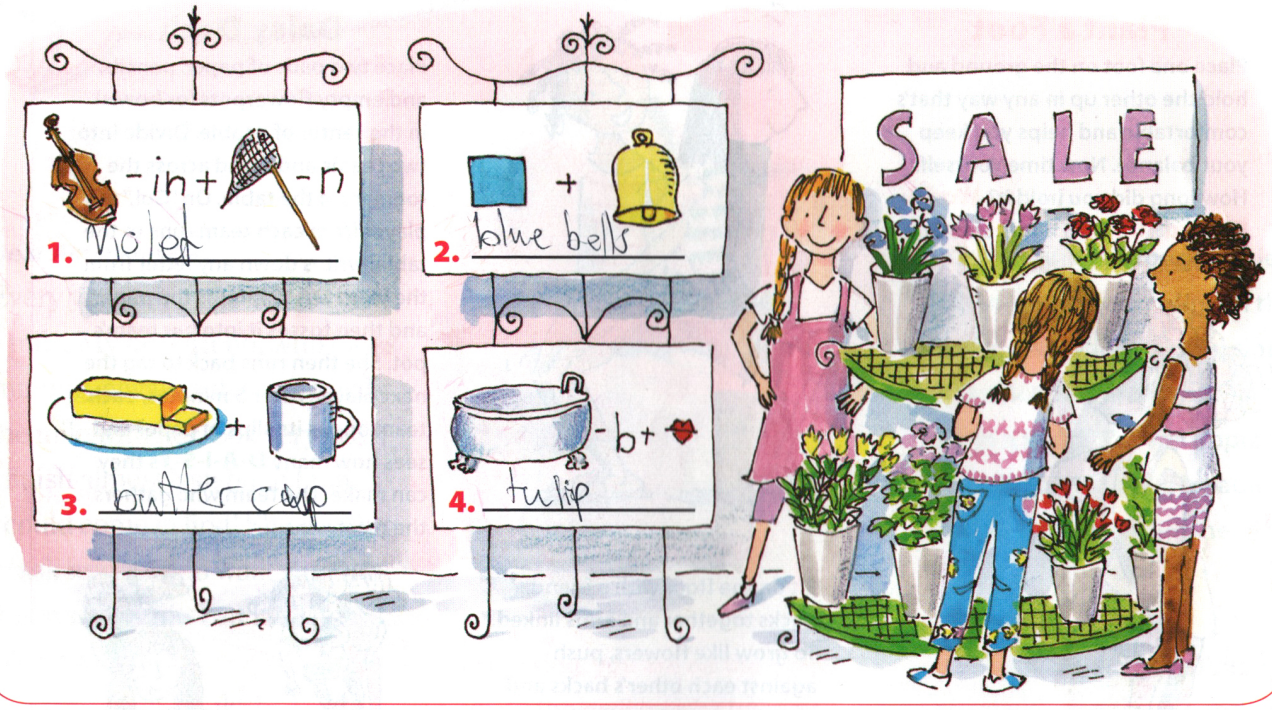
Someone broke the flower off one of these flower stems. Circle the number of the stem without the flower. **Hint:** A stem touches the center of the flower.



Violin

Rebus Flower Shop

Read the signs to find which flowers are on sale today.



Laffateria

What do you call a male ladybug?

Confused.

Jessica S.
Age 13, California

What kind of fruit do scarecrows like?

Strawberries.

Courtney T.
Age 12, New York

Baby garden snake: Mom, am I a poisonous snake?
Mom garden snake: No. Why, dear?

Baby snake: Because I just bit my tongue.

Meagan V.
Age 13, Alabama

What kinds of pets do librarians prefer?

Book worms.

Sarah F.
Age 11, Maryland

Why did the spider cross the computer?

He was looking for the Web.

Bridget M.
Age 12, Florida

Funny Business
Send your best joke to Brain Waves! Write to the address on page 2. Include your name, birth date, school photo, and signature.

Can You Do It?

Dig into this floral fun!

Plant a Foot

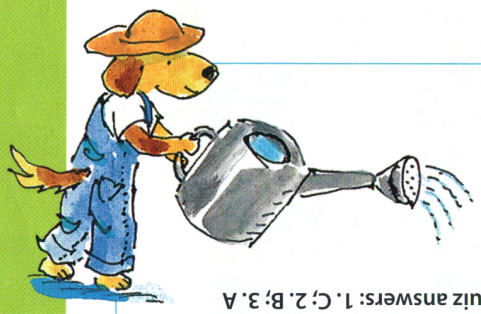
Place one foot on the ground and hold the other up in any way that's comfortable and helps you keep your balance. Now time yourself. How long did you hold it? **World Record Time:** 76 hours and 40 minutes!

Growing Girls

Sit on the floor with a friend, backs together and arms linked. To grow like flowers, push against each other's backs and stand up together. *Challenger:* Add another pair of friends and try again. How many pairs can you add?

Daisy Dash

Place two pads of paper, pencils, and empty flowerpots (or bowls) in the center of a table. Divide into two teams and stand across the room from the table. On "Go!," a player from each team runs to the table, writes down any letter from the word **DAISY,** folds the paper, and then tosses it into her team's pot. She then runs back to tag the next player. After 5 minutes, each team opens its slips of paper and sees how many **D-A-I-S-Y**s they can make. The team who gathers the most wins.



Answer Box

Beautiful Landing

Photo Fun

Kimberly named her goat Daisy!

Calculator Crop

To grow **lilies,** you need to **hoe** your **soil** so it's nice and **loose.** Plant the bulbs, then wet them with a **hose.** Be sure to watch out for the **bees**

Art Sleuth

1. page 48 2. cover 3. page 18

Vine o' Nine

1. Jasmine 2. Daisy 3. Violet 4. Tiger Lily 5. Flower 6. Lily 7. Petunia 8. Buttercup 9. Briar Rose

Stem Search

The stem is number 6.

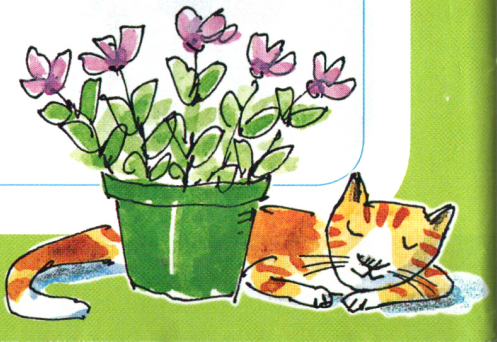
Rebus Flower Shop

1. violet 2. bluebell 3. buttercup 4. tulips

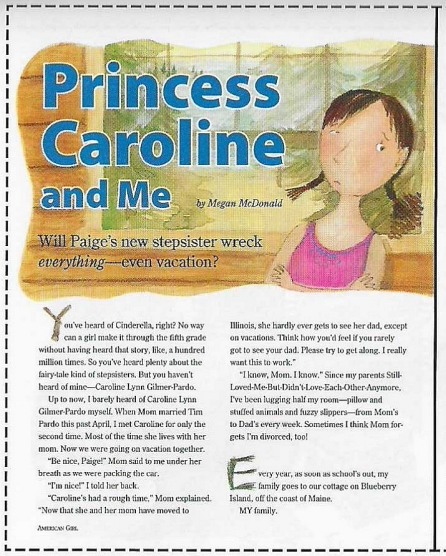
Girl's Express

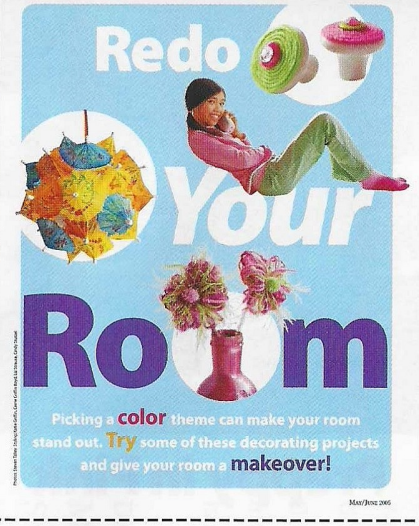
The buzzword, synchronicity, appears on page 17.

Quiz answers: 1. C; 2. B; 3. A

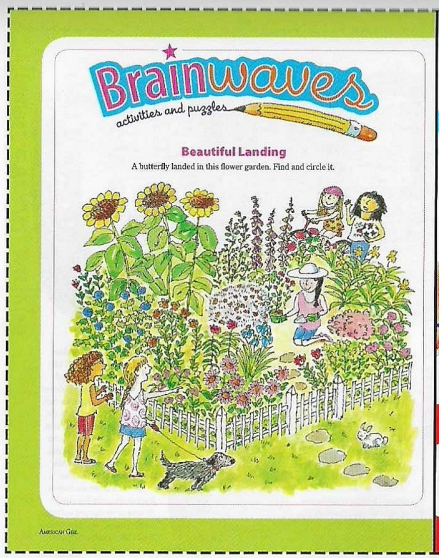


Illustrations: Susan McAliley


Princess Caroline and Me
by Megan McDonald
Will Paige's new stepsister wreck everything—even vacation?
You've heard of Cinderella, right? No way can a girl make it through the fifth grade without having heard that story, like, a hundred million times. So you've heard plenty about the fairy-tale kind of stepsisters. But you haven't heard of mine—Caroline Lynn Gilmer-Pardo.
Up to now, I barely heard of Caroline Lynn Gilmer-Pardo myself. When Mom married Tim Pardo this past April, I met Caroline for only the second time. Most of the time she lives with her mom. Now we were going on vacation together.
"Be nice, Paige!" Mom said to me under her breath as we were packing the car.
"I'm nice!" I told her back.
"Caroline's had a rough time," Mom explained. "Now that she and her mom have moved to Illinois, she hardly ever gets to see her dad, except on vacations. Think how you'd feel if you rarely got to see your dad. Please try to get along. I really want this to work."
"I know, Mom. I know." Since my parents Still-Loved-Me-But-Didn't-Love-Each-Other-Anymore, I've been lugging half my room—pillow and stuffed animals and fuzzy slippers—from Mom's to Dad's every week. Sometimes I think Mom forgets I'm divorced, too!
Every year, as soon as school's out, my family goes to our cottage on Blueberry Island, off the coast of Maine.
MY family.
American Girl

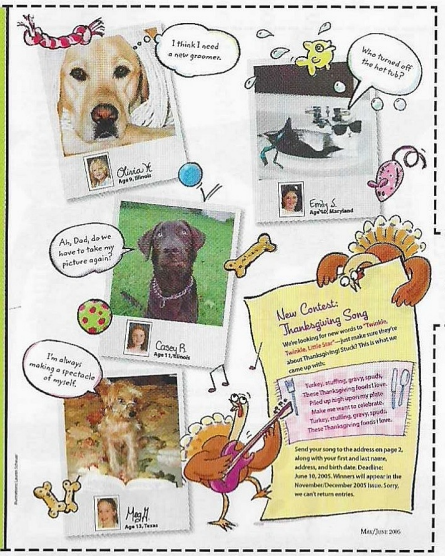

Redo Your Room
Picking a color theme can make your room stand out. Try some of these decorating projects and give your room a makeover!
May/June 2005

A



Madalynn M. does a double under cross, which means she swings the rope under her feet twice and crosses her arms, all before landing!
Brooke A. is all smiles during a knee jump. Yep, she's jumping on her knees!
ed Up!

B


I think I need a new groomer.
What turned off the hot tub?
Ah, Dad, do we have to take my picture again?
I'm always making a spectacle of myself.
New Contest: Thanksgiving Song
We're looking for new words to "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star"—just make sure they're about Thanksgiving! Stuck? This is what we came up with:
Turkey, stuffing, gravy, spuds,
These Thanksgiving foods I love.
Piled-up high upon my plate
Make me want to celebrate.
Turkey, stuffing, gravy, spuds,
These Thanksgiving foods I love.
Send your song to the address on page 2, along with your first and last name, address, and birth date. Deadline: June 10, 2005. Winners will appear in the November/December 2005 issue. Sorry, we can't return entries.
May/June 2005

C

AmericanGirl.com
More to Do!
It's Party Time!
Great theme parties inspired by readers like you
American Girl
Coming up in the August issue
It's our JUMBO issue, with posters, recipes, bedroom makeovers, jokes, and everything you love!
Express Yourself
Turn your paintings and drawings into cool keepsakes!
Surf's Up!
See the winners of our "Design a Surfboard" contest
Super Splashy
Great ideas for get-wet fun
Take a Giant Quiz!
Dozens of questions that will tease your brain

American Girl
Redo Your Room with Cool Crafts!
Keep in Touch with Faraway Friends
Funny Pet Photos
Plus! Girls talk about allowance

D

Mini Mag

With the Mini Mag, you can make a miniature copy of *American Girl*. All you need are scissors and a stapler. Read the directions all the way through before you begin.

1 Cut out each pair of pages only on the dotted lines. Be sure to cut around the tabs marked with the letters A, B, C, and D.

2 Stack the pages on top of one another in the order shown below, with the letters on the tabs facing up.

Continued

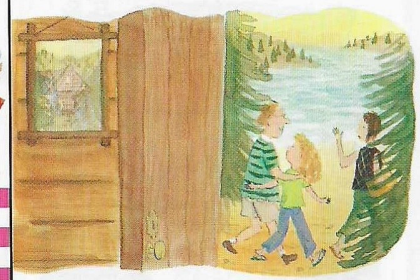
Quiz

Pop Quiz! and Mom

See how well you know your parents! Fill out this chart and have them look at your answers.

- Full name (including middle)?
- Childhood nickname?
- Birthday (and year)?
- Place where he/she was born?
- Oldest, middle, youngest, or only child?
- Sings in the car?
- Would rather have nachos or ice cream?
- Popcorn, candy, or both at the movies?
- Did he/she ever have long hair?
- Did he/she ever wear braces?
- Did he/she ever win a really exciting prize?
- Favorite comic-strip character?
- Drinks coffee? With sugar or cream?
- Can tell a really funny joke?
- Is the most like you?

American Girl



That used to mean Dad, Mom, me, and, of course, Charlie, our dog. Charlie's divorced, too. But he just lives with my dad now.

This year, my family is Mom, me, Tim (I'm supposed to call him by his first name!), and Caroline. No Dad. And no Charlie. Sniff! But I promised Mom I'd keep an open mind and make the best of it.

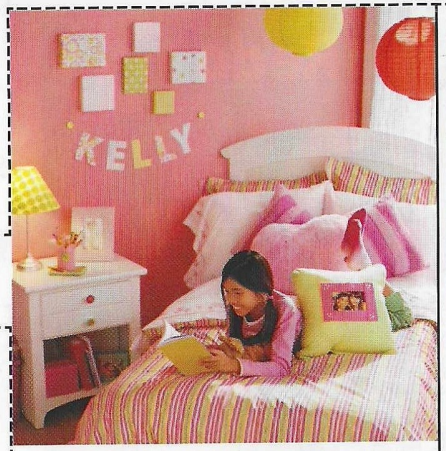
I already learned three things about my stepsister in the car: 1) She thinks the License Plate Game is for babies. 2) She has never seen a lighthouse. 3) She is not thrilled about sharing a bunk bed with me.

As soon as we stepped off the ferry, Caroline took one look around and said, "This is it?" I bit my tongue. What was she expecting? Chicago?

But I was excited. When I smell Blueberry Island for the first time, it makes me turn cartwheels inside. That sea smell, the low cry of the foghorn, the slap-slap of waves on the shore, and the late afternoon fog creeping in on little cat feet, just like the poem Ms. Sanders read to us last year.

The fog was like pea soup by the time we got to the cottage. As soon as we dumped our bags, I said, "C'mon. Let's go to White Head Cliffs to watch the sunset."

May/June 2005



Preppy in Pink

American Girl

Plush Pencil Cup
Cut a piece of felt to fit around a clean, empty jar. Leave two inches extra so that the felt is taller than the jar. Glue the felt to the jar. Let dry. Cut slits in the extra felt at the top of the jar. Add a line of glue at the top of each slit. Dip in glitter and let dry. Add a cute applique to the front.

It's MY Room
Cut the letters of your name out of colorful patterned scrapbook papers. Go to americangirl.com and click on "Magazine" to print out letter templates. Use a paper punch to put holes in the tops of the letters. Connect the letters with colorful string and hang.

Yarn Pulls
Paint new drawer pulls (available at hardware stores). Let dry. Cover the top of the pull with glue. Starting at the center, begin wrapping yarn around in a spiral, pressing it into the glue. Cut yarn when you reach the edge. Let dry. Embellish it by gluing on a button and a rhinestone.

Wrap It Up
Fill for cool wall art, wrap box tops in fun wrapping paper. Ask an adult to help you put a nail in your wall to hang each box top.

Pillow Pics
Cut 4 strips of felt. Use fabric glue to attach felt to a pillow, allowing space for a picture to slide in. Change the photo every week!

May/June 2005

Contest

Sit, Stay...Smile!

Your pets really know how to ham it up. These photos made us laugh the hardest!

We're getting a dog?!
Did you see me in "Pirates of the Furdeen"?
Kylie F. Age 13, Oregon
Kayla F. Age 12, Washington
Just let me sleep for five more minutes.
Huh?
Renee K. Age 12, New York
Morgan C. Shannon C. Both age 11, Illinois

Or another funny pet photo from Page 6, check out the poster on page 16.

American Girl

HELP!

Dear American Girl,
Every year our class has to run a mile. My best friend, who hates running, always asks me to walk the mile with her. So every year I finish almost last, but if I ran, I could come in first! She is going to ask me again to walk with her this year, so how can I tell her I don't want to?

Runner against walking
Try being the one to bring up the subject first. Say, "I'm really excited about running the mile this year. I'm going to try to get the best time in the class." That way, your friend will know you care about running. If she still asks you to walk with her, say, "Sorry, but I really want to run this time." Don't feel guilty. She can still walk if she wants to without holding you back. Maybe you'll even inspire her to run, too!

*

Dear American Girl,
I'm fat! I try to eat right and I exercise a lot, but I'm still the fat one in my family.

The Blob
Bodies come in all shapes and sizes. If you are eating right and exercising, you are on the right track. The goal is to be healthy and happy—not perfect. Still, you need to be comfortable with your weight. If you're not, talk to your doctor about it. Being proud of the girl you are will make you happier and more confident, and nothing is more attractive than that.

*

Dear American Girl,
My mom has no time for me. She's always cooking, cleaning, or doing errands. She probably won't listen if I talk to her. How can I get quality time with Mom?

No Time
Your mom may be busy with tasks, but they are not as important as you are. Look for a good time to talk to her, then speak up and tell her how you feel! Sometimes it's easier to discuss tough subjects when you're both riding in the car doing errands or folding clothes together, so think about giving Mom a hand. She will appreciate your help, and you'll be able to ask for her help when you need it, too.

*

Dear American Girl,
I'm not very responsible. I always forget things and end up getting myself in trouble. How can I be more self-sufficient?

Not Responsible
Focus on the types of things that tend to get you into trouble, and tackle those first. Always losing important papers? Try using a special clip on the fridge to hold them, and put them there as soon as you get home every day. Late for school a lot? Make your lunch, pack your backpack, and lay out your outfit every night before bed. Forget to do chores? Put a wipe-off board in your room where you'll see it, and make a list of what needs to get done each week. Give yourself time to get used to having new habits, and with a little effort, you'll be on top of things.

May/June 2005

Hanna L. does a TJ, a complicated, high-flying trick named after its inventor.

Tawny M. uses two ropes for the jump jump!

With quick tricks and sparkling smiles, the Firecrackers jump-rope team explodes with excitement.

All Fir

American Girl

Photo Fun

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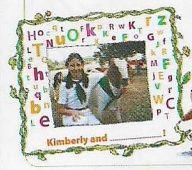

Kimberly and

Alphabet List
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Use a calculator to solve each equation, then turn the calculator upside down to see a word. Write the word on the blank where it best fits.

8,000 − 895 = _____ 1,216 × 4 = _____ 25,000 ÷ 7 = _____
6,000 − 662 = _____ 177,239 × 3 = _____ 292 × 12 = _____

To grow _____, you need to _____.
Your _____ so it's nice and _____.
Plant the bulbs, then wet them with a _____.
Be sure to watch out for the _____!

Art Sleuth

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1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

May/June 2005

Mini Mag

3 Fold the stack of pages in half along the solid line in the center. The cover of the magazine should now be on top. Run your fingernail down the folded edge to help the pages lie flat.

4 Open the folded stack. Staple along the center line. Cut off the tabs, and you're done!

HELP!

Dear *American Girl,*

Every year our class has to run a mile. My best friend, who hates running, always asks me to walk the mile with her. So every year I finish almost last, but if I ran, I could come in first! She is going to ask me again to walk with her this year, so how can I tell her I don't want to?

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Illustrations: Susan McAliley

MORE HELP!

Dear *American Girl,*

I always cry on the last day of school. People on my bus laugh at me and make me feel worse. I'm going into sixth grade, and it's embarrassing.

Crybaby

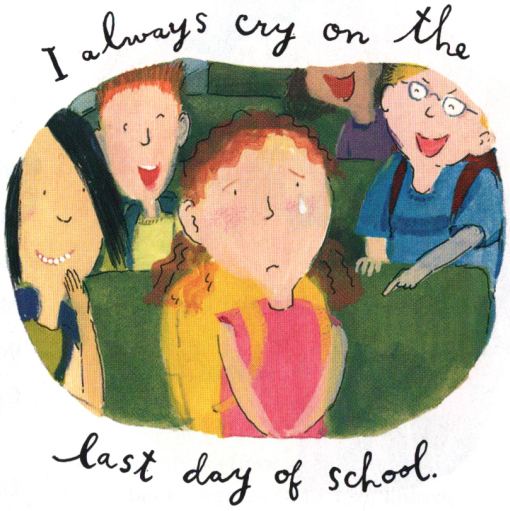
When you have a great year, it can be hard to say good-bye when it's over. So plan ahead. Bring snacks or little treats to hand out to everyone. Seeing all those smiles will cheer you up. Pass around a blank notebook and ask your friends and teachers to write funny memories in it. Take your camera and get pictures of everyone on the last day. If you stay busy, you won't feel as sad. But if you cry anyway and someone laughs at you? Try to smile through your tears and say, "Hey, I'm just a sentimental person. What can I say?"

★

Dear *American Girl,*

Next year we start foreign languages in school. All my friends are taking Spanish, but I want to take French. What should I do?

Bonjour or Hola?



It's fun to take a class with your friends, but it's also good to try something new on your own. So be brave and sign up for French. You'll have something different to talk about when you get together with your friends, and who knows? You might even make some new friends, too.

★

Dear *American Girl,*

My parents just separated and I want to tell them how I feel, but I don't want them to think that I am a baby. How do I tell them what I think?

Unsure

Separation is serious, and wanting to talk about your feelings doesn't make you a baby—at all. You don't have to deal with this all alone. Say, "I'm upset and I need to talk about what's going on." Make a list of the questions you have and ask them, even if you don't think your parents have all the answers. It might also help you to talk about your feelings with someone outside your family, such as a family therapist or school counselor. Ask your parents to help you find the person who's right for you to talk to. Don't keep your feelings to yourself. Talking will make it easier to handle a hard situation.

★

Advice from You

"The next time your friend comes over and there's nothing to do, try this. I took my camera, and my best friend put on some of my clothes. I was the photographer and she was the model. We had lots of fun, and the pictures turned out great!"

Aleah K.
Age 12, Florida

Need advice? Got advice? Write:

Help!
American Girl magazine™
8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562

Victoria had a lot of fun with the puppies at our cover photoshoot. Go to americangirl.com and click on "Magazine" to vote for your favorite picture of Victoria and the puppy.

Katie K. and Melanie C. tested crafts for "Redo Your Room."

Go to americangirl.com and click on "Magazine" to become a tester.

Behind the Scenes

Spring has sprung at *American Girl* and so have a lot of new ideas!

For more boredom busters and quick quizzes, click on "Magazine" at americangirl.com.

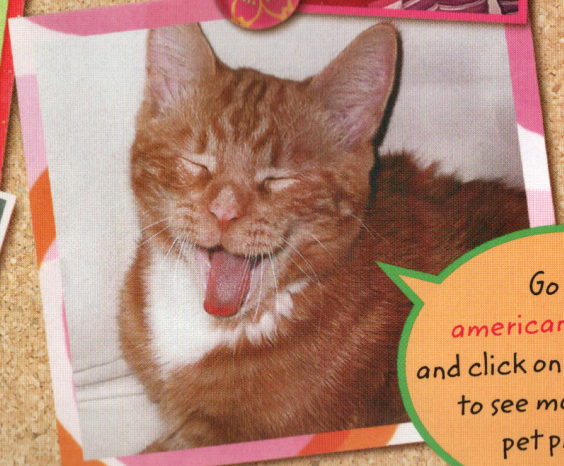
We fell in love with the puppies we had at our cover photoshoot. They were only seven weeks old! Take a look at our new furry friends.

Awesome facts
marvelous ideas
excellent stories
radical cooking and craft ideas
incredible artwork
creates memories
amazing real experiences
new and fun BFF crafts

Great quizzes
interesting puzzles
realizes dreams
I'm **L**oving *American Girl*!

Thanks to Ashley S., age 10, who sent us this great poem!

Emili and Kaylee M.'s cat, Pumpkin made us giggle!



Go to americangirl.com and click on "Magazine" to see more funny pet photos.

It's Party Time!

Great theme parties inspired by readers like you

More to Do!

For fun and games, go to "Magazine" at americangirl.com.

American Girl™

It's our JUMBO issue, with posters, recipes, boredom busters, jokes, and everything you love!

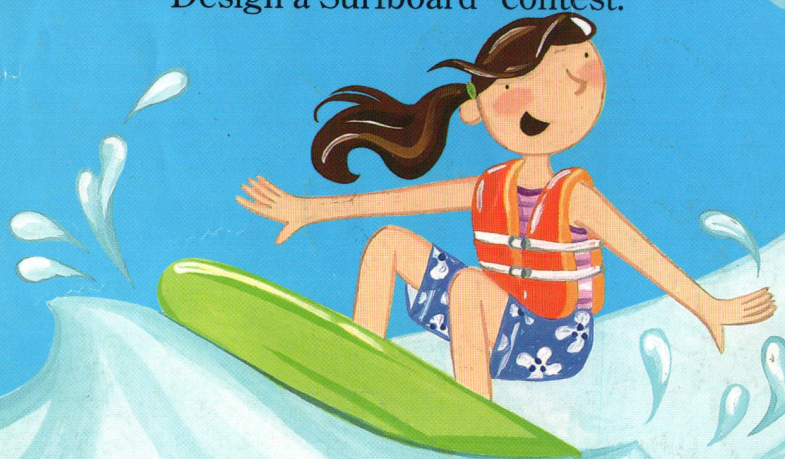
Coming up in the July/August issue

Express Yourself

Turn your paintings and drawings into cool keepsakes!

Surf's Up!

See the winners of our "Design a Surfboard" contest.



Super Splashy

Great ideas for get-wet fun

Take a Giant Quiz!

Dozens of questions that will tease your brain

Illustrations: Carol Yoshizumi